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ABSTRACT

Experiences and events are presented on determining a successful way of conducting an education needs assessment on the Jicarilla Apache reservation in Dulce, New Mexico, using the following process: (1) identifying needs to devise questions on expressed concerns; (2) analyzing data; and (3) developing a program to correct the concern. The objective of the survey was to update current needs assessment and arrive at an assessment reflecting educational needs of the school, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the community. Results of the survey created a Language and Culture Committee in the tribe, which appropriated funds for a community-based program in language instruction and the hiring of a teacher-coordinator and two language teachers. Essential points identified to conduct a successful survey were: informing the community on what was happening; utilizing community people; not extending the purpose of the survey; meeting people at their convenience; and carefully selecting interviewers. Events leading to the development of the 67-question needs assessment survey and compiled data from the 530 responses received are fully describes. The complete survey is appended. (ERB)



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# ASSESSING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AN INDIAN COMMUNITY

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OCCASIONAL PAPER SERIES

# ASSESSING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AN INDIAN COMMUNITY

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# ASSESSING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AN INDIAN COMMUNITY

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## INTRODUCTION

The intent of this paper is to share experiences encountered in conducting educational needs assessments in an isolated Indian community within a large reservation in northern New Mexico. We will outline steps involved in a needs assessment and identify some elements to be considered in constructing and administering an instrument that will be reflective of the needs of the different elements of the community.

## A FIRST APPROACH

How does one approach an Indian community with the idea of another needs assessment, especially after previous needs assessments have shown few or no results? Will the same people that replied to previous questionnaires be willing to reply to yet another questionnaire? They will, provided the conditions necessary to conducting a successful survey are met.

In one of the first educational needs assessments done by community people, a number of items that could become impediments were identified. It was necessary to encourage community involvement where there had been little or none before and determine the people's needs and interests. We tried also to identify the type of instruction/training that could benefit the largest

number of people.

The following points were identified as essential to conducting a successful survey.

1. Inform the people about what is going to happen. Open meetings at which the purpose of the survey is discussed are important. The media, in this case, the local paper, are also important ways of transmitting information. The needs assessors must be available to answer questions and give explanations when and where needed.
2. Do not over extend the purpose(s) of the survey. People who have responded to questionnaires tend to expect something to happen as a result. Since surveys often seek random information that leads to the completion of a thesis or dissertation from which the community may never benefit, this should be carefully explained before the information is elicited. The survey should be a survey without a promise.
3. Make strong statements about why the survey is being undertaken.
4. Utilize as many community people as possible. These should be people accepted by the community in order to build the confidence necessary to obtain accurate information. It is also essential to use native speakers to interview in the homes of non-English speakers.
5. Use the problem area as a guide, then progress from a broad to a more specific area.
6. Once you have developed the questions, test them on people in the street and interview in both English and the tribe's

language. This will enable the data gatherer to see if they elicit the correct response.

7. Recognize the audience to whom you are administering the instrument, and treat older people with respect. This necessitates a great deal of patience.
8. Meet people at their convenience. In some instances interviewers will have to adjust their schedules and arrange to meet with people either after work, in the evening, or on weekends.
9. The best interview is the face-to-face interview with the head of the household.
10. Make sure that translations are accurate and reflect the intent of the question. Much can be lost in translating from English to a Native American language. In some instances, there are no equivalent words for the English word in the Indian language, so the expertise of a native speaker fluent in English may be required.
11. Use care in the selection of the interviewers. While they should be bilingual, they must also be accepted by the community. Spend enough time training them so that they fully understand the instrument and how they are to proceed.
12. If an interviewer isn't comfortable with a particular interviewee, have someone else do the interview.
13. Have the interviewers do a trial run, then follow up on their technique and approach during the training period.

14. Keep the people informed on the stages of work. Report back to the tribal council and explain the various stages undergone in the data collection. The council becomes the pivotal point in collecting information in any Indian tribe. You need their constant support.
15. Work with a committee in constructing the instrument.
16. Closely monitor the surveys as they are turned in. Check surveys daily and work from a master chart to ensure that surveyors are making adequate progress.

A number of materials had to be developed as this survey progressed, since there was no information on locations of households, heads of households, or demographic data essential for dealing with a stratified sample. The materials developed for the survey provided information needed by other programs. It is thus essential to identify those resources that the community already has. Information can be obtained from voter registration and tribal membership rolls, census figures, and school records. Many people within a reservation will still be missed because of distance, inaccessability, or lack of information regarding their whereabouts.

## A SECOND APPROACH

We tried to survey as many members of the community as possible to obtain the most accurate picture of the educational needs. We defined education as a life-long process of organized efforts to instruct, from the pre-school child to the adult. Here, one of our first problems surfaced. Some felt that since

this was to be a community survey, it should survey the adult community. Others felt that our efforts should be directed at the educational system. Still others were more concerned about job training for those members of the tribe that were in the labor force. We wanted an instrument that reflected the concerns of as many community elements as possible. More important, we wanted the survey questions to allow individuals to express degrees of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with an aspect of education and allow them to reflect on how they would make improvements. One of the most salient aspects of this needs assessment was what we referred to as the "information base." This system employs a series of meetings where community representatives develop an inventory of educational concerns. The facilitator writes these concerns on a blackboard and the group ranks the items in order of importance. This affords everyone an opportunity to re-examine their concerns and decide if they are shared by others. This is also a test of the authenticity of the concerns aired.

The meetings we set up were informative and provided materials needed to construct an acceptable instrument. Before the first meeting, we set an objective for the educational needs assessment and the parameters for gathering information.

> Objective: To update the current needs assessment and arrive at an assessment that reflects the educational needs of the school, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the community.

This needs assessment was to serve as the data base for the different educational programs operating in the community of

Dulce, New Mexico. It would also provide the base for a coordinated educational plan. Input would be provided by the three existing agencies within the community: the tribe, the school, and the BIA. The needs assessment used prior studies or assessments carried out independently by the above agencies as well as a more recent survey by the Community Health Services. All data gathered is on file in the Education Consultant's office, and the narrative and tabular materials were presented to the three agencies for approval and up-dating.

## CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS: EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Needs assessments come in many shapes and forms. Sometimes they reflect more the desires of the information seekers rather than the needs of a community. They often substantiate feelings already held toward specific programs. Most are conceived in the privacy of an office or within the confines of a consultant agency whose livelihood depends on doing needs assessments or evaluations.

How can biases be avoided in needs assessments? How can viable information be extracted, especially in an area where opinion forms the basis for action? Where opinion is deeply ingrained, how can we educate the public to make intelligent choices? When the need for a program is substantiated on worn-out figures or data that was perhaps applicable on a large-scale territorial basis, it is difficult to extract information truly reflective of a need. It is, on the other hand, easy to administer a questionnaire to those individuals who will give the kinds

of answers we want to hear. With these cautions and questions ringing in our ears, we proceeded to do a needs assessment that would be different, that would elicit responses to particular items with specific recommendations, and more importantly, that would give everyone an opportunity to have a say.

The first step, then, was a series of meetings leading to development of an instrument answering the needs of the tribe, the school, and the BIA in the community of Dulce.

## Initial Meeting

We called an initial meeting of group representatives and specialists in data collection, management, and linguistics. The first meeting was held in December, 1980. In attendance were representatives of the tribe, the school, and the BIA; a linguistic consultant; the director of the Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center at California State University, Los Angeles; and an education consultant to the Jicarilla Apache Tribe. After the initial intent of the needs assessment was explained, we moved into areas of need as perceived by the representative group. This was to be the first meeting in developing the data base from which an instrument would be developed.

The following items surfaced:

1. Concern about the size of the instrument.
2. The language of the instrument should be handled adequately.
3. The information may not be of any immediate use for some programs such as bilingual education because of the early due date.
4. There are different levels of needs assessments, and we must move past the body counting aspect.

5. The proposed needs assessment should be used as a data base.

6. We need to look at culture and language on a very supportive basis.

7. Some items may be reflective of policy.

8. There may be "felt needs" since more needs assessments are done for Indian education than for the dominant society.

9. We should start out with the educational leaders and do an "information based needs assessment." After this, the needs should be prioritized.

10. We should look at the legislative aspects of some of the needs, i.e., Office of Civil Rights, Lau. There is a need to do a test of language dominance.

11. The instrument must be devised for the entire community. Try to avoid sampling.

12. From the school's perspective, we must consider the three different communities: Hispanic, Indian, and Anglo.

13. Where are we with the language? Who is it that wants language? What is the need in culture and the language? This needs to be brought out in the instrument.

14. An instrument must be devised that brings things together.

15. We must give feedback to the people.

16. What are the educational needs of the community? This is a step removed from the formal schooling provided by the school.

17. This should be a "one shot" assessment instead of a series of surveys by different programs.

We agreed to proceed with an information-based conference with the educational leaders of the community. Because of an already existing interagency group (made up of representatives of all the groups in the community who met to discuss educational problems), we decided that they would be the first group to proceed with needs identification.

We considered assigning a historian to work with the group and of maintaining a photographic record. It was also agreed

that a sample instrument be available to be handed out for comments by the next meeting. This, obviously would be based on very limited information, but we needed to move rapidly in order to get input from the group at the next meeting. These results would lead to development of an instrument that would measure feelings rather than real concerns.

Interagency Meeting

This meeting was chaired by the Superintendent of the Dulce Schools. Attention was focused on the proposal for doing a needs assessment. The education consultant explained the purpose of the needs assessment and introduced the two consultants who were constructing the instrument.

After lengthy discussion, the group identified these areas or needs:

1. Teach Jicarilla culture and language.
2. Where and who should be taught culture and language cannot expand our understanding.
3. Need for school and community to work together.
4. Need to involve parents.
5. Lack of motivation on the part of parents.
6. Need for remediation in reading and math.
7. Teacher attitude.
8. Student attendance. More recordkeeping.
9. Coordination, integration, and follow-through to services.
10. Coordination.
11. Need to improve communication.
12. Expansion of efforts to expand student self-confidence.

13. A plan is needed to attract and retain quality teachers.

14. Teachers should be accorded better community acceptance (e.g., fishing and hunting considerations).

15. Teachers should be provided a comparable salary with other employees on the reservation.

16. Teacher acceptance of the community is needed.

17. Improved acceptance of non-tribal members.

18. Need more financial resources for education.

19. Knowledge about sources information.

20. Need more adequate health and housing services for the non-Indian.

21. Need to reflect revised priorities of course offerings and integrate into curriculum.

22. Integrate special programs in curriculum.

23. Need to involve school staff in planning.

24. Drug and alcohol abuse should be emphasized in the early grades.

25. Need for alternative education for high school students.

26. Identification of cultural factors and sensitivity that may have an important influence on the education of students in the Jicarilla community and resurgence of changes in Tribal Society in all walks of life. Develop a cultural awareness program.

27. Identify the role of the high school in post-high school education coordination of schools responsibility.

28. A need to ask teachers and students about educational needs.

29. Need to involve teachers in process.

These needs were analyzed by the two consultants and condensed into the following general areas:

1. Teach culture and language.

2. Involve parents in the education of their children.

3. Improve student attendance.

4. Coordinate and integrate services.
5. Improve communication.
6. Improve teacher attitudes.
7. Improve reading and math.
8. Improve student self-concept.
9. Develop a plan of continuing education.
10. Attract and retain quality teachers.
11. Acquire financial resources.
12. Provide adequate health and housing for non-tribal members.
13. Reflect curriculum priorities and integrate same.
14. Involve instructional staff in needs assessment and in program planning.
15. Conduct school programs in alcohol and drug abuse.
16. Offer alternative high school education programs.
17. Identification and response to cultural factors.
18. Clarification of roles in post-high school programs.

The group strongly recommended scheduling a similar meeting with the teachers since the majority of the problems were school-oriented. School representatives found the instrument totally unacceptable. They felt it did not extract needed information. Based on a long discussion with the Superintendent and the Associate Superintendent, two facts became very clear: The instrument needed a great deal of work before it would address the needs of the school, and the timelines were much too tight to allow for meetings with teachers and community. We decided to halt further work on the instrument until all groups had an opportunity to give input on the "Information Base" from which the in-

strument would be structured. We then set up a meeting with the teachers.

The next meeting, held at the University of New Mexico, involved the education, linguistics, and the Indian education consultants. This meeting's purpose was to discuss the previous meeting's results and examine the data gathered. The ranked needs were also presented.

It was suggested that we construct sample questions to reflect the information that should be extracted. This would allow us to present the consultants with the type of questions most adequately responsive to the points discussed earlier. Namely, that the questions be probing, clearly identifying problems and providing the respondent with distinct choices. We felt also that the instrument should generate deeper thinking into the problems identified.

The following sample questions were designed and presented to the consultants and the school.

1. What conditions do you think should exist for children to learn more?

   _____ Teachers of the same ethnic background as the students.
   _____ Teachers who are well prepared, regardless of their feelings about children.
   _____ A supportive home environment.
   _____ A shorter school day.
   _____ More homework.
   _____ Smaller classes.
   _____ More emphasis on culture and language.
   _____ Teachers who understand the culture and mores of the students.
   _____ Use of the native tongue and English as mediums of instruction.

2. How can community-school cooperation best be achieved?

   _____ Through the duly elected schoolboard.

_____ Through more open meetings with the community.
_____ Through a community-advisory board.
_____ Through parent-teacher conference.
_____ The school and the community meeting on a regular basis.

3. How do you think the schools can attract and retain better teachers?

_____ Increased pay.
_____ Better living conditions.
_____ Use more native teachers.
_____ The tribe, the schools, and the BIA developing a strong recruiting program.

4. How do you see community education improving the education of people on the reservation?

_____ Offer more instruction in life skills.

_____ Use of regular teachers in community education programs.

_____ Have the schools use the community center facilities to complement their course-of-study.

The school, in response to the request for sample questions, provided us with the following:

1. Given the limited budget of only one teacher for Jicarilla language, arts and crafts, and culture, and given the need for intensive teaching and time if students are to learn a language, rank order the following choices with 1 being your first choice and 6, your last.

   a. Spend two hours a week on language/culture with the first three grades and three hours a week with grades four through six. _____

   b. Spend three hours a week on language/culture with the first three grades and two hours a week with grades four through six. _____

   c. Spend five hours a week on language/culture with the first three grades and drop the course in the upper grades, leaving the language responsibility to the parents. _____

   d. Spend two hours a day on language and culture in the first two grades and drop the course beyond the point with the language responsibility left to the parents. _____

e. Retain the students in the first two grades until they are fluent in Jicarilla. _____

f. Devote more time to culture and heritage and leave the language responsibility to the parents. _____

2. Given the limited number of qualified certified people available to teach the Jicarilla language, rank order the following options, with 1 being your first choice and 7, your last choice.

a. The Jicarilla language should be the responsibility of the parents to teach at home. _____

b. The Jicarilla language should be the responsibility of the primary school to teach in the first three grades. _____

c. The Jicarilla language should be the responsibility of the community to teach a pre-school program. _____

d. The Jicarilla language should be taught within the community to the adults so that they could pass the language on to the children. _____

e. The Jicarilla language should be the responsibility of the community adult education program so that more adults could learn the language and thus pass it on to their children. _____

f. The Jicarilla language should be the responsibility of the headstart program. _____

g. The Jicarilla language should be the responsibility of elementary school grades K-6. _____

We tried to find questions reflective of the problem or concern expressed by those in attendance at the information-based conference. This point is more clearly illustrated by tracing one concern through to the formulation of the question.

Concern: Where are we with the language? What is the need in the area of culture and language? Where and who should be taught culture and language? How do we develop teacher sensitivity for culture and language? (These concerns were expressed by all three groups at the information-based conference.) Based on

this information, the following statements were developed. Check one number in each statement.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The least important courses in our schools are cultural studies. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Our students are not helped by the schools to be aware and proud of their ethnic heritage. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Children should be allowed to speak only English in the schools. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

We felt that this type of statement would not address the real concern of parents and teachers and that the responses generating responses provided little or no information from which to structure a programming recommendation, so we restructured both the format and the statements. Recognizing that the community had rated language and culture at the top of the list and that they were concerned over the erosion of their language and culture, we formulated questions that would clarify community feelings and direction. This section, Language and Culture, necessitated questions aimed at the respondent's language and at the place of language and culture in school.

We also felt that the sequence in which the questions appeared was important, establishing continuity in thinking and the rationale in the responses elicited.

51. Which of the following languages do you speak or understand? (Please check)

___ Apache ___ Navajo ___ Spanish ___ English

___ Other (specify): _____

52. Which of the following languages are spoken in your home? (Please check)

___ Apache ___ Navajo ___ Spanish ___ English

___ Other (specify): _____

53. We would like to know how you feel about the use of the native language of the child (Jicarilla, Spanish, or other) in the learning process. Rank five of the statements in order of importance.

_____ the native language should be a regular part of the curriculum

_____ the native language should be a part of the regular language arts courses

_____ students should be taught to be aware and proud of their ethnic heritage

_____ children would do better if they learned their native language for the first few years, then studied English

_____ the least important courses in our school are cultural studies

_____ using the native language in the classroom does not help children learn better

_____ children feel better about themselves if they are able to speak their own language well and know about their heritage

_____ learning the English language is more important than learning the native language

_____ the native language is not important to the educational process and does not belong in the curriculum

_____ using the native language in the classroom helps children learn better

This sampling of questions is used to compare the two types of questions that could have been used and to illustrate how sequencing of questions becomes an important aspect of a needs assessment.

Response: The responses indicate clearly that the Native American community is interested in the whole area of language and culture.

1. The largest number speak or understand English, with approximately half also speaking or understanding Apache.

2. The great majority speak English at home with less than one-half of those also speaking Apache.

3. A large number of respondents connected language with ethnicity and felt it was important that students be aware and proud of their heritage.

4. While a majority felt that the language should be taught at home by the parents, there was also a strong feeling that the language/culture should be taught in the lower grades starting with Headstart.

5. A large number felt that the language/culture instruction could be substituted for music or physical education.

6. The majority felt that the study of Jicarilla language and culture should be limited to Jicarilla students and then made an elective.

Action: Through the series of meetings designed to discuss the areas of concern, it became clear that most community people felt that the Title VII bilingual program was designed to deal with the previously identified problems in language. This necessitated both an explanation of the purpose of bilingual education and an understanding of the proposal that had been funded for the Dulce Schools. Once this information was given and the fact that the existing program did not address the problem, the tribe initiated a proposal that lead to the creation of a Language and Culture Committee. The tribal council appropriated funds for a community-based program in language instruction. This program authorized hiring of a teacher-coordinator and two other language

teachers and a community language instruction program became a reality.

This shows the pattern from: (1) identifying needs to devising question(s) that allow people to express their concerns, (2) analyzing data, and (3) developing a program to correct the problem.

# EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## I. Demographic Data

The first part of this questionnaire has to do with some general information about yourself. Please place a check mark (✓) by the appropriate answer:

1. Are you between the ages of: ___14-24 ___25-34 ___35-44 ___45-54 ___above 55

2. Sex: ___ Male ___ Female

3. School attendance: ___ High School graduate ___ G.E.D.

   a. If neither of the above:

      To what grade did you attend school? ___

      Did you go to college? If so, how many years? ___

   b. Did you ever attend any other kind of school (vocational, business college, etc.)? If so, how many years? _____
      Specify what type of school: _____

   c. Please check if you are currently enrolled in any of the following:

      ___ Adult Education classes
      ___ University of New Mexico Extension
      ___ Adams State Extension
      ___ University of New Mexico Community Education
      ___ New Mexico State University Farmington
      ___ Adams State resident

4. What is your marital status? (Please check one)

   ___married ___single ___divorced ___widowed

5. What is your ethnicity? (Please check one)

   ___Jicarilla Apache ___Anglo ___Spanish ___Navajo

   ___Other (specify): _____

6a. Please enter the number of children you have in the following:

   ___public elementary school ___public secondary school
   ___parochial school ___at home

b. Please check your income level:

___ $5,000
___ $5,000 - $10,000
___$10,000 - $15,000
___$15,000 - $20,000
___$20,000 - $25,000
___$25,000 - $30,000
___$30,000 - $35,000
___above $35,000

7. Please indicate who you work for:

___BIA ___school ___tribe

8. What is your relationship to the Dulce Schools? (Please check one)

___board member ___administrator ___teacher ___aide
___student ___bus driver ___tutor ___custodian/ maintenance

9. Where do you reside? (Please check one)

___Dulce _____Gobernador _____Lumberton
___On the Jicarilla Reservation outside of Dulce
___Rio Arriba County (outside one of the above)

10. How long have you lived in this community? (Please check one)

___5 years ___10 years ___15 years ___20 years
___Born and raised here

11. Where did you attend public school? (Please check one)

___Dulce public schools ___BIA schools ___parochial school
___Other (specify): _____

## II. Community-School Concerns

The next section deals with questions about the schools and community and how you feel about them.

12. What do you think are the biggest problems with which the schools and community must deal? Rank the five most important problems, by placing numbers 1-5 in the appropriate blanks.

___parents' lack of interest
___pupils' lack of interest
___disrespect for teachers
___teachers' lack of interest
___school board policies
___teachers' lack of ability
___school health services
___facilities
___finances
___school administration
___discipline
___curriculum
___dope/drugs
___vandalism

___lack of parental control
___problems in the home
___juvenile delinquency
___we have no problems
___using new/up-to-date methods in the schools
___drinking
___fighting
___attendance/truancy
___cafeteria food
___don't know

PROBE: If "dope/drugs" and/or "drinking" are a problem in the schools, can you tell the extent to which children in the community use drugs and/or alcohol?

13. DRUGS: ___sometimes ___very often ___all the time

14. ALCOHOL: ___sometimes ___very often ___all the time

15. In your opinion, in what ways are your local schools/ programs particularly good? Rank the five most important qualities by placing numbers 1-5 in the appropriate blanks for the school(s) you are most familiar with.

| | Dulce Elem. | Dulce H.S. | Gober-nador | St. Francis Parochial | Continuing/ Adult Education |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. extracurricular activities | | | | | |
| b. small school/ classes | | | | | |
| c. teachers | | | | | |
| d. facilities | | | | | |
| e. good adminis-tration | | | | | |
| f. curriculum | | | | | |
| g. up-to-date teaching methods | | | | | |
| h. good student/ teacher rela-tionships | | | | | |
| i. parents are interested/ participate | | | | | |
| j. discipline | | | | | |
| k. transportation system | | | | | |
| l. school cafeteria food | | | | | |
| m. nothing good | | | | | |
| n. don't know | | | | | |
| o. school health services | | | | | |

16. What do you think the purpose of the schools system should be? Rank the three most important purposes.

___prepare all children for college (college prep)
___prepare all children so that they can get jobs vocational education)
___teach the basic skills (reading, writing, language and math)
___provide educational opportunities from kindergarten to adulthood
___provide alternative programs that are different from a typical school
___Other (Specify): _____

PROBE: If one of your answers is, "provide alternate programs," which three of the following programs would you like to see established? Choose three in order of importance by placing a "1" on first place choice, "2" for second place, and "3" for third place.

17.
___vocational education
___distributive education (workstudy programs)
___individualized instruction
___enrichment courses
___performance contracts (children contract to learn at an expected achievement level)
___special education
___art education
___college prep
___agriculture
___bilingual education

18. What educational opportunities would you like to see provided for the adult community? Choose five, in order of importance.

___adult basic education (reading, writing, and math)
___courses that will teach me skills so I can stay in my home and earn extra income
___courses leading to a college degree (BA, BS)
___courses leading to a masters degree with resident credit
___counseling services
___real estate courses
___prevention of alcohol abuse
___home maintenance
___prevention of drug abuse

___courses leading to teacher recertification with resident credit

___courses leading to jobs off the reservation

___courses leading to jobs on the reservation

___business courses

___law courses

___GED courses

___Other (specify):____
_____
_____

PROBE: If your answer to question #18 is, "courses leading to jobs on or off the reservation," then which of the following would you choose for job training? Pick three.

19. ___livestock raising or management

___natural resource management

___computer technology

___cabinet furniture making

___restaurant and liquor management

___food and liquor handling

___electronic/mechanic production line assembly

___construction-road/housing

___government/tribal employment

___plumbing/electrician

___business management

___health needs

___food production

___tribal law

___arts and crafts

___transportation

___secretarial

___store clerk

___mechanic/machinist

___maintenance

20. The school offers various special education courses and programs for those children who are physically and/or mentally in need of special education. If you do not want your child (if they qualify) in such programs, what alternative might you accept? (Check only one)

___allow my child to stay home and not be educated

___provide home education for my child

___leave my child in the regular classes and programs at the school

___allow my child to complete elementary school and then quit

___provide job skills training if possible

___Other (specify): _____

21. The schools provide remediation and instruction in basic skills. Where do you think it is best to provide such instruction? (Rank order using "1" for first preference and "4" for last preference.)

| | Elementary | Secondary |
|---|---|---|
| Reading | ___ | ___ |
| Math | ___ | ___ |
| Counseling services | ___ | ___ |
| Library services | ___ | ___ |

22. What are the sources of information you use to judge the quality of the schools in your community, that is, where do you get your information about the schools? Rank the first, second, and third sources.

___other adults in the community
___students in the schools
___parent/teacher open house
___parents of other students
___State Department of Education
___your own children
___relatives
___counselor
___PAC
___PTA
___school board
___teachers
___tribe
___newspapers
___newsletter
___Other (specify): _____

23. Are the above sources adequate for your needs? ___Yes ___No
If not, please suggest other sources.

_____

_____

24. Where do you go when you need information about your child? Name the first, second, and third choices.

___superintendent of BIA
___tribal office
___school counselor
___dormitory counselor (BIA)
___principal
___teacher
___neighbor
___relative

___juvenile officers ___social services

___superintendent of schools ___clinic

___school board member ___church

___Other (please list): _____

25. Some students are not interested in school. Often they keep other students from working in school or become truant problems. What should be done in these cases? (Rank 5)

___special counseling

___harsher discipline

___investigate nutritional needs of such children

___make the parents responsible

___special classes for all who are not interested

___put in schools for problem children

___teach the students how to develop inner discipline

___expel/suspend them

___teachers should take more interest in such students

___establish a juvenile half-way house

___offer better or more interesting curriculum/teaching methods

___suspend from the class/classes where they are a problem

___open another wing in the dorm to provide safety from bad home life

___juvenile drug/alcohol abuse program

___don't know

26. There are two attendance laws that affect high school students in Dulce. The state law requires children to attend school until they reach the age of 16. The Jicarilla tribal law requires Indian children to attend school until they reach the age of 18 or graduate, whichever comes first. Some students are not interested in school. Often they do not come to school for many days or they just quit school. What should be done in these cases? Choose the three most effective methods for dealing with this problem by placing a check mark (✓) on the space by the item of your choice.

___file on the students or parents in court

___special counseling

___make the parents responsible to keep them in school

___put in schools for problem chldren

___expel/suspend them

___vocational training

___establish a juvenile half-way house

___job skills training

___provide classes in basic skills

___provide agricultural training

___change the tribal law

___Other (specify): _____

27. Do you think the schools/adult education, including daycare and Headstart are trying new ways, methods, and ideas? (Please check one under the appropriate column.)

| | Schools | Daycare | Headstart | Adult Education |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| not interested enough | | | | |
| too ready to try new ideas | | | | |
| just about right | | | | |
| don't know | | | | |

28. What educational innovations would you like to see made in your schools, adult education, Headstart, or daycare?

| | Schools | Daycare | Headstart | Adult Education |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| use of more TV | | | | |
| programmed instruction | | | | |
| open classroom | | | | |
| learning centers | | | | |
| invidualized instruction | | | | |
| use of more films | | | | |

29. The Johnson O'Malley (JOM) committee funds serveral programs in the elementary and high school. Rate the present programs according to importance (1, most important; 5, least important)

___high school native studies

___Jicarilla language (elementary)

___JOM assistance to children for clothing, shoes, school supplies, etc.

___JOM assistance to the school for field trips, class projects, etc.

___Teacher aides

30. Is the Johnson O'Malley program in Headstart:

___Adequate ___In need of additional support

31. Rate the quality of the following pre-school educational programs offered by the Tribe. (check one)

Daycare program: ___poor ___average ___above average ___below average ___excellent

Headstart program: ___poor ___average ___above average ___below average ___excellent

III. Parental Responsibility

The next series of questions deals with the area of parental responsibility and parental involvement in the education of children.

32. How much do you want your child(ren) to finish high school? (check one)

___you insist that they finish ___you don't care

___you want them to finish, but will let them decide

33. How often do you help your child(ren) with their homework or other school work? (please check one)

___all of the time ___as the child requests assistance

___once in a while ___about one-half of the time

___never ___other

34. Rank the following from high to low. It is important for my child:

___to excel in school (be on the honor roll)

___to be good in school (grades)

___to be a good athlete

___to graduate from high school and get a job

___to go to college

___to attend school regularly

___to be popular

35. Whose responsibility is it to teach parenting and/or sex education? (Rank 3)

___schools ___churches

___tribal community education ___PHS

___home ___BIA

___other (specify):_____

36. Where would you rank the chief blame for children who do poorly in school? (Rank 3)

___home life of children ___school

___children themselves ___teachers

___the community ___TV, radio

___no opinion

___Other (specify): _____

37. Whose primary responsbility is it to see that the child is educated? (Rank 3)

___the parents ___the tribe
___the schools ___the State
___the community ___Other (specify): _____

38. Rank from most important to least important. Parents should take more responsibility in the education of their children by:

___attending board meetings

___having more say in school affairs

___joining PAC committees and attending meetings

___becoming homeroom parents

___becoming more directly involved in the learning process (i.e., helping in the classroom as volunteer aides).

___assisting at extracurricular activities such as dances, ball games, field trips, guest speakers

___assisting at fund raising activities

IV. School Environment

The following series of questions were designed to obtain information on the day-to-day aspects of the operation of a school system. These aspects do not show up on curriculum evaluation or the quality of instruction but become an integral part of the life of the student and affect the morale of a student body.

39. How do you rate the food served in the schools in which your child eats?

___excellent ___good ___average ___not very good

___poor ___don't know

40. School lunch costs will rise in the future due to inflation and waste. (Waste is defined as the practice of the children to claim they will eat in the cafeteria and then do not. As many as 50 meals can be wasted in a single day.) How would you propose to keep lunch costs down? (Please check one)

___make cafeteria lunches mandatory (enforce closed campus)

___children should carry sack lunches

___JOM should help offset losses

___go ahead and raise the prices

41. How long should the school year be? (Please check one)

___nine months

___nine months with a three-month summer remedial program

___12 months (year round) with several short vacations

42. How long should the week and day be? (Please check one)

___5 days, 6 hours ___5 days, 7 hours

___4 days, 7 hours ___4 days, 8 hours

43. Should homework be required? (Please check one)

___for all students at all grade levels

___only for students who need it

___for all high school students

___only for high school students who need it

___Other (specify): _____

44. How much homework should children be given? (Please check one)

___one-half hour per night plus one hour per weekend

___one hour per night plus one hour per weekend

___one hour per night plus two hours per weekend

___nightly but not weekends

___Other (specify): _____

45. How do you feel about the discipline in the local schools? (Please check one)

| | Elementary | Secondary |
|---|---|---|
| too strict | ___ | ___ |
| not strict enough | ___ | ___ |
| just about right | ___ | ___ |
| don't know | ___ | ___ |

PROBE: If you answered "too strict," can you explain what you mean? In what ways is discipline "too strict?" (Please check one)

| | Elementary | Secondary |
|---|---|---|
| 46. filing on children at juvenile court | ___ | ___ |
| teachers have too much authority | ___ | ___ |
| closed campus doesn't allow children to go anywhere | ___ | ___ |
| paddling | ___ | ___ |
| Other (specify): _____ | ___ | ___ |

PROBE: If you answered "not strict enough," can you tell what you mean? In what ways is discipline not strict enough?

| | Elementary | Secondary |
|---|---|---|
| 47. disrespect for teachers | ___ | ___ |
| rules are not enforced | ___ | ___ |

| | Elementary | Secondary |
|---|---|---|
| teachers lack authority | ___ | ___ |
| students have too much freedom | ___ | ___ |
| dress code is too liberal | ___ | ___ |
| don't know | ___ | ___ |
| Other (specify): _____ | ___ | ___ |

48. Some people say that if the schools and the teachers interest the children in learning, most disciplinary problems disappear. Do you:

___agree ___disagree ___don't know

49. The Dulce District employs a full time nurse on the staff. How would you rate the health services provided by the school? (Please check one)

___superior ___adequate ___lacking

PROBE: If you feel the health services offered by the school are lacking, can you suggest areas of needed improvements?

___employ additional nurse(s)

___employ an EMT

___limit nurse's responsibility to health needs and emergencies

___employ a nurses aide

___employ a nurse's secretary

___Other (specify): _____

## V. Language and Culture

The following questions are designed to get a better idea of how you feel about an issue that is very important to the community. We need to ascertain the extent of this feeling and how best to deal with the whole area of language and culture.

51. Which of the following languages do you speak or understand? (Please check)

___Apache ___Navajo ___Spanish ___English

___Other (specify): _____

52. Which of the following languages are spoken in your home? (Please check)

___Apache ___Navajo ___Spanish ___English

___Other (specify): _____

53. We would like to know how you feel about the use of the native language of the child (Jicarilla, Spanish, or other) in the learning process. (Rank 5 of the statements in order of importance.)

___the native language should be a regular part of the curriculum

___the native language should be a part of the regular language arts courses

___students should be taught to be aware and proud of their ethnic heritage

___children would do better if they learned their native language for the first few years, then studied English

___the least important courses in our school are cultural studies

___using the native language in the classroom does not help children learn better

___children feel better about themselves if they are able to speak their own language well and know about their own heritage

___learning the English language is more important than learning the native language

___the native language is not important to the educational process and does not belong in the curriculum

___using the native language in the classroom helps children learn better

54. Where do you think the Jicarilla language and/or culture should be taught? (Check as many as apply.)

___Headstart

___kindergarten

___primary grades

___all through the elementary grades

___only to adults

___in the home by parents

___not at all

___day care

___at the secondary level ___for young parents

___at all grade levels ___community education

___Other (specify): _____

PROBE: If you feel that language and culture should be taught in the primary or elementary grades, which courses are you willing to have cut back?

55. ___first period language arts
___second period language arts
} includes reading (1), writing, and spelling

___third period science

___fourth period social studies

___fifth period music/PE

___sixth period math

___language and culture should be a part of all courses

___None

56. Who should be allowed to take Jicarilla language and culture courses? (Check as many as apply.)

___it should be required of all students

___it should be required of only Jicarilla students

___it should be an elective for students who want to learn the language and culture

___all teachers, administrators, and other school personnel should take such courses

___no one should take such courses; language and culture should be taught in the home

___young parents (adults) so as to foster language in the home

## VI. Teachers

Teacher turnover is an area of major concern to the schools and the community. The following questions are designed to obtain more information in this area.

57. Why do you think teachers leave the school system? (Rank the three most important reasons.)

___excessive duties

___social life is limited

___salaries are too low

___living conditions are inadequate

___the students are hard to teach

___not enough community support

___teachers are treated as outsiders

___lack of communication between the administration and the teachers

___medical facilities are inadequate

___Other (specify): _____

58. What do you think the Dulce schools and community could do in order to attract and retain quality teachers in their school system? (Rank the five most important suggestions.)

___teachers should be granted resident considerations (fishing, hunting, etc.)

___teachers should be provided a salary comparable to other agencies in the community

___community people should become more involved with teachers (i.e., invite them to their homes)

___provide better housing services

___provide teachers with more financial resources for classroom use

___provide better medical/health services

___more involvement of teachers in the planning and implementation of curriculum

___provide merit salary raises to teachers who improve student learning

___provide teachers with cultural awareness training to help them understand and accept the community

___provide teachers with extra help to handle discipline problems so that they can spend more time on the essentials of teaching

___provide continuing educational opportunities

___reduce extra curricular duties

PROBE: If you answered "salaries should be comparable," where should the money to increase salaries come from? (Choose one)

59. ___tribe

___JOM

___school funding by re-arranging priorities

___Other (specify): _____

VII. School Policies

The school, through the community's duly elected representations, the school board, sets down certain policies designed to improve on a number of educational matters affecting the welfare of students. Your answers to the following questions will help the school determine how you feel about some policies.

60. The Dulce Board of Education has recently instituted minimum proficiencies at various grade levels in the basic skills subjects. Do you agree that students should master basic minimum proficiencies in order to be promoted? (Please check one)

___strongly agree ___agree ___do not have an opinion

___disagree ___strongly disagree

61. The Dulce Board of Education has recently revised the grading policy in order to facilitate better communication through greater consistency at all levels of education within the system. Do you agree that a better understanding of expectations by both students and parents will be reached in this manner?

___strongly agree ___agree

___disagree ___strongly disagree

___do not have an opinion

62. The Dulce Board of Education hopes the new grading policy will result in a greater challenge to the students and thus encourage them to be better prepared at graduation. Do you agree that this is a realistic expectation?

___strongly agree ___agree ___do not have an opinion

___disagree ___strongly disagree

63. Do you feel a Tribal Education Committee should be established to represent the tribe on educational matters?

___Yes ___No

64. There is some question in the community over athletics, sports, and physical education. What do you think about athletics? (Rank the three to five most important, from high low for the junior high school and the high school.

| | High School | Junior High School |
|---|---|---|
| our athletic programs are adequate for the size of the community | | |
| sports should be for every child and not a matter of team competition | | |
| when we have good teams, students are proud and there is more school spirit | | |
| competitive athletics should only be for boys | | |
| our athletic programs have been neglected; there needs to be more financing | | |
| there is too much emphasis on athletics | | |
| there should be more intramural events for all children | | |
| to be eligible for sports, students should have higher grades | | |
| there is a lack of opportunity for girls in athletics | | |
| there is a lack of after-school sports activities | | |

65. How adequate is the elementary athletic program? (Check one)

___adequate for the size of the community

___adequate for boys only

___adequate for both boys and girls

___need a stronger athletic program for the elementary grades

PROBE: If you feel we "need a stronger athletic program," in which of the following areas do we need it?

66. ___football ___basketball

___volleyball ___track and field

___Other (specify): _____

67. Who do you think should fund an elementary athletics program?

___parents of the children

___tribe

___schools (local funds at expense of other priorities)

___JOM

___State funds

___Other (specify): _____

## SUMMARY

The intent of the survey instrument was to determine how people felt about certain educational concerns and how those concerns could be addressed. This departs from most surveys that measure feelings by degree, do not identify how those attitudes arise, and are reinforced. We are aware that this was an extensive instrument, but reducing the questions invariably leads to the omission of important concerns over problems.

In building the data base for the development of the instrument, areas of concern were identified by different school, tribe, and BIA representatives. This, at times, led to strong identification by individuals as with their affiliations. While affiliation may influence how questions were answered, all respondents are members of the community. Regardless of individual perspectives, ultimately, the important aspect is how education-related problems are solved.

This survey was a cooperative venture involving the Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center in Los Angeles, California and the American Indian Bilingual Education Center at the University of New Mexico. These centers provided the necessary resources to make this survey possible.

1. The **Demographic Data** showed that there were 530 people who responded to the questions, the largest number female. Of these, over half (55 percent) had graduated from high school with the majority of these graduates (82 percent) having attended Dulce public schools.

a. Of the 530 respondents, 414 reside in Dulce with well over fifty percent born and raised there.

b. Over 25 percent of the respondents were parents with children in the public school.

2. In the broader area on **Community-School Concerns**, the following sentiments emerged:

a. The biggest problem the schools and community must face is parental and student apathy.

b. The best part of the schools are the teachers.

c. The best way to deal with students' apathy is through special counseling.

d. Remediation and instruction in basic skills is best when provided in the areas of reading and math in the elementary school and through the counseling service in the high school.

e. Many would like to see vocational education as an alternative program.

f. The best way for dealing with students not interested in school is job skills counseling and special counseling.

g. The most important educational opportunity to be provided the adult community is adult basic education including reading, writing, and math.

h. The most important courses leading to jobs on or off the reservation are business management and livestock raising/ management.

i. The most important program funded through Johnson O'Malley funds is one that provides assistance to children for clothing, shoes, school supplies, etc.

j. The Johnson O'Malley program is in need of additional support.

k. Both the schools and the adult education programs could use programmed instruction, learning centers, and individualized instruction as a new approach.

l. The larger percentage of respondents rated the daycare and Headstart programs as "average."

m. Most respondents felt that the school system should teach the basic skills (reading, writing, language, and math).

3. The area on **Parental Responsibility** revealed the following sentiments:

a. The overwhelming majority insist that their children finish high school.

b. A large percentage help their children with their homework, the largest group providing such help as the child requests it.

c. Parents see themselves as primarily responsible for their children's education with the schools and the community rounding it out.

d. Parenting and/or sex education should be taught at home.

e. They feel they can take greater responsibility in the education of their children by attending board meetings.

f. Parents feel that home life is the cause when children do poorly in school.

g. The majority obtain information about the schools from the students but will also go directly to the teacher for information.

h. They feel it is important for their children to get good grades.

4. In the area of **School Environment**, the majority felt that:
   a. Cafeteria food is average.
   b. Making lunches mandatory might keep their cost down.
   c. The school year is fine the way it is (nine months).
   d. The school day is fine at six hours a day with a five-day week.
5. The area on **Language and Culture** elicited a large number of respondents and produced the following findings:
   a. The largest number speak or understand English with approximately half of those also speaking or understanding Apache.
   b. The great majority speak English at home with less than one-half of those also speaking Apache.
   c. A large number of respondents connected language with ethnicity and felt it was important that students be aware and proud of their heritage.
   d. While a majority felt that the language should be taught at home by the parents, there was also a strong feeling that the language/culture should be taught in the lower grades starting with Headstart.
   e. A large number felt that language/culture instruction could be substituted for music or physical education.
   f. The majority felt that the study of Jicarilla language and culture should be limited to Jicarilla students and then made an elective.

6. In the area on the problem of **Teachers**, the respondents felt:
   a. That the principal reason for teachers leaving was low salary.
   b. That teachers should be paid a salary comparable to salaries paid by other community agencies.
   c. That money for salary increases could be obtained by rearranging budget priorities.
7. In the area of **School Policies**, the majority supported the new grading policy and felt that this would lead to a better understanding of student and parent expectations. They also felt that students should master basic minimum proficiencies in order to be promoted.
   a. A large majority felt that a Tribal Education Committee should be established to represent the tribe on educational matters.
   b. The majority felt that sports should be for every child and not necessarily a matter of team competition but that good teams lead to more school spirit. They also felt that there is a need for a stronger athletic program in the elementary school with track and field as the first choice. Funding of such a program should be left to the school at the expense of other priorities.
   c. Homework should be required of all students at all grade levels nightly but not on weekends.
   d. Discipline is both the elementary and high school is not strict enough. They felt that there is disrespect for

teachers and the rules are not enforced. The majority also felt that if the teachers interest the children in learning, most disciplinary problems will disappear.

e. The majority rated the school health services adequate, but some felt that a nurse's aide might be employed.